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the second, of a ball, cube, and cylinder of hardwood. These are distinctly nursery playthings, and the majority of four-year old children in our kindergartens are already beyond the stage when these things offer novelty or suggestion for activity. It is the desire to cling to these things in logical order, long after their use is outgrown, that is responsible for much of the futile play in the kindergarten.

The third, fourth, fifth, and sixth gifts form a series of building blocks. In these Froebel's idea finds its most happy embodiment, for the children of kindergarten age, and on into the first and second grades. (1) They offer a material that can be adapted to many uses in construction. (2) As the idea grows and develops, the material responds to the growing needs; the number of parts increases; the variety of form grows. (3) There is no *fixity* about these gifts used day after day; the construction that suited yesterday can be improved upon today. (4) The division of the cubes into parts which are geometric solids lays a good basis for imagery needful in all thinking, in all measuring, and in all making. (5) The division of the cubes into multiples furnishes a continuous subconscious growth in the grasp of number, and a direct training in numerical combination and partition.

Today, as was Froebel's plan, all this formal, mathematical side stands merely as an appeal to sense-perception, and to inference, while the child is using his material to carry out his ideas in play. Number and form are emphasized only when necessary to the carrying out of his play.

READING IN THE THIRD GRADE.[1]

GUDRUN THORNE-THOMSEN.

THE ideal life of a child in the primary school is one of great activity, activity directed toward educational ends. The child is all the time doing things. He is either producing something for the society in which he lives or investigating new phases of his environment, social or scientific. He is engaged in healthful out-of-door exercise, playing games, and singing; in short, he is following the laws of his being. He is given opportunities for using, and, therefore, for developing, his sense-organs to their fullest extent, for forming judgments and drawing inferences; and the power gained is used in actual doing.

If these premises are agreed upon, it does not seem difficult to assign to reading and to other language study their proper place. Reading is best acquired, as are other branches of knowledge, under the impulse of necessity, in order to reinforce and conduct activity. It thus becomes an organic part of the being, a ready tool. If the children feel the purpose and direction of all their work at the proper time, when there exists a corresponding power to satisfy the appetite, a hunger for reading arises. It would be a violation of the laws of the child's development to force him to read before this hunger has manifested itself; and if the child is normally developed, the psychologists tell us, the power to deal with written or printed symbols will be developed in the seventh or eighth year. Before that time the child may incidentally have gained some acquaintance with these symbols.

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[1] This reading lesson, in leaflet form, may be obtained in quantity from The University of Chicago Press.

To teach reading has been regarded as a most difficult task, and often both teacher and pupils despair. The poor results of several years' constant, dull drill point to the failure of dozens of old and new methods. When reading is taught under the strong impulse of the child to gain vital knowledge, when from the beginning reading is imaging, it is an easy matter to acquire the power to read. A great many children pick it up themselves, and if others were not forced to the book too early, and with no motive but to learn to read, a great many more children would, undoubtedly, teach themselves.

In the third grade there are at present a number of children who have learned to recognize words, but who cannot read. That is, they form no mental images while reading, and of course the books are no enjoyment, no source of inspiration, to them. Their oral reading is stilted, expressionless, purely mechanical. The problem with these children is to overcome their indifference or aversion to reading, to set them right in their attitude toward books. With this in view, the first step is to leave books alone, excepting frequent readings from them by the teacher. Next, when an experience has taken a strong hold of such a group, when there is noticeable a desire for knowledge to enhance this experience, the proper literature should be selected and given to them. The children will read while the teacher stands by to help, so that the thought may come rapidly. The teacher may ask questions which for answers require the child to think only of the meaning of the printed page (thought analysis).

When these pupils have reached the point where reading is thinking, the only problem is to find enough appropriate literature. There is yet a great lack of reading material having true literary merit adapted to the minds of little children.

Because reading forms so much a part of all the other work of the school, and is so organically bound up with it, no hour is set aside for it on our program. Some days the children may read a great deal and other days perhaps not at all, the necessity and desire being the only guide. For the same reason, some members of the class may read much more than others, each child being treated individually.

READING LESSON FOR THE THIRD GRADE.

Sven and Kari.

FROM THE NORWEGIAN, BY GUDRUN THORNE-THOMSEN.

SVEN was the son of the parson. He had lived with his grandparents in the city for a long time, and had gone to school there. He was only eleven years old, but had become brimful of learning. No one in the whole parish knew how this would end; he knew so many queer words and had read so many queer books in so many queer languages.

But Old Kari at the manor only shook her head when he began with all these queer words.

"If that's the way you are going to talk when you become a parson, you'll find yourself the only one in the church," said Old Kari.

Well, then it was one day that the minister and his wife were away on a visit to the judge with the two oldest children, and Sven was at home alone with Old Kari.

He was a little sulky because he had not been invited. He didn't like it at all.

It was in the afternoon. Sven didn't quite know how to make time pass, so he went out into the kitchen where Kari was spreading bread and butter for the farm hands. "Kari, shall we play school?" asked Sven. "You must be the pupil and I the teacher." "Oh, yes," said Kari, "but I, too, want to have my turn at being the teacher." "I know everything," said Sven. And then he began. He walked back and forth on the big floor, just as his teacher used to do at school. Sven looked around to see where he should begin. There was the coffee-pot just ready to be taken from the fire.

SVEN. Now I shall ask you something, Kari, which I'm sure you can't answer. Who was it in this world who first drank coffee?

KARI. We did not learn that in school in my time.

SVEN. The first one who drank coffee in this world was a goat.

KARI. Did the goat drink coffee?

SVEN. Ate coffee, I think, would be more correct.

KARI. So that would be more correct?

SVEN. The coffee beans, you see, we get from a tree. It grows in Arabia and other warm places, and reaches a height of six to twelve meters.

KARI. Well, what about the goats? I might just as well hear the whole thing at once.

SVEN. It was this way. Down there in Arabia the people noticed that the goats were so fond of these berries, and when they had eaten of them they became so wide awake that they ran and jumped about in the middle of the night. And then the people wanted to see if they, too, could stay awake in the night; so they made coffee. But

I'm not sure that this is true. But it is in a book.

KARI. Yes, you don't know a single thing except what is in books.

Sven saw his chance to take a lump of sugar.

SVEN. What do you call this?

KARI. That's stealing.

SVEN. Sugar is a cane.

KARI. Is that lump a cane?

SVEN. At first, don't you understand, at first. Dear me, Kari, I explain everything from the very beginning, don't you see?

KARI. Yes, yes, indeed.

SVEN. Sugar we get from a cane which grows in warm countries. In that cane there is a juice, and from that juice sugar is made.

KARI. Now let me have a chance.

SVEN. Yes, indeed. It'll be hard, though, to find something that I don't know.

KARI. We'll see. What is it you are chewing now?

SVEN. A sandwich.

KARI. How do we get butter?

SVEN. We churn it from cream.

KARI. How do we get cream?

SVEN. We skim the milk.

KARI. How does that happen?

SVEN. How does that happen? You get cream from the milk.

KARI. Yes, of course; but how does it happen?

SVEN. The milk turns into cream.

KARI. How is that? Explain.

SVEN. Oh, you just get cream from the milk.

KARI. I thought so. I suppose this isn't in your books. He can't tell about that which he sees every day. He knows how the moon and the sun look, but he doesn't know that the fat rises to the top of the milk because it is lighter. And that is what becomes cream.

SVEN. Well, yes, that's quite right; the fat rises. The fat is always on top.

KARI. That was butter. What is bread made of?

SVEN. Of flour.

KARI. How do you get flour?

SVEN. From grain.

KARI. How do you get flour from the grain?

SVEN. It is ground at the mill.

KARI. How is it ground?

SVEN. You are so particular. I don't know how to grind.

KARI. One would know that you left home when you were seven years old. Don't you know that the grain is ground between two round stones, and that the upper one goes around and the lower one lies still? And why does the mill-stone go around?

SVEN. Because, because —

KARI. Oh, you don't know. Because the mill-wheel goes around. The river turns the mill-wheel, the mill-wheel turns the stone. Do you think that everything that comes through between the mill-stones is flour?

SVEN. What else would it be?

KARI. Both bran and flour.

SVEN. What's bran?

KARI. It's the outside of the wheat, and the flour is the inside. When the grain is ground by the mill-stones, the miller must sift it. Then the fine flour goes through the sieve, but the bran is like small shells; it remains. The bran is given to the horses; but some people bake a thin, coarse, hard bread of it.

SVEN. Oh, this is very hard, Kari!

KARI. Yes, isn't it? It's ten minutes' walk down to the mill. Do you think it is hard to plow, too? Why do we plow, Sven?

SVEN. So that the grain may grow.

KARI. Why can't it grow unless we plow?

SVEN. It just can't.

KARI. You don't know at all. It cannot grow in the hard soil; the fine roots cannot get a hold in such hard soil, and the seed must have air. Now you know that. And why do we harrow? Because the plow only tears up big lumps and cuts deep furrows, and the seed needs smooth, soft soil. What else must we do with the ground?

SVEN. It must be rolled?

KARI. Why?

SVEN. Don't ask such things, Kari. Can't you tell it right away?

KARI. The roller pushes the grain down into the ground. If the grain were allowed to lie on top it would dry up, or the birds would come and eat it.

SVEN. You're not so stupid, after all, Kari!

KARI. Oh, I suppose each one will do in his place.

SVEN. Tell me more.

KARI. The rest of it you know well. When the grain is ripe in the autumn, we cut it and dry it and thrash it in the barn.

SVEN. What is thrashing, really, Kari?

KARI. To thrash is to shake the sheaves so that straw and chaff separate from the kernels.

SVEN. Now, Kari, how good a piece of bread and butter would taste!

KARI. You don't really deserve it, who don't know how bread and butter are made.

SVEN. Then neither do you deserve coffee.

KARI. Yes, that's true.

SVEN. We shall have to bear with each other, as the teacher says.

KARI. Yes, that's true.

And then she poured two large cups of coffee and spread two big pieces of the fresh bread, and then Kari and Sven ate and drank. They thought one might be as good as the other, and were the same good old friends.